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As for prevention of diseases in disaster areas, the Ministry of Public Health formed a 500-man Antiepidemic Command Unit, which was divided into four battalions to work separately in the Yellow River basin, northern Anhwei, northern Kiangsu, and Pingyuan. The battalions pursued antiepidemic and treatment work and helped improve environmental sanitation, which resulted in minimizing epidemics in the disaster areas. Some 800,000 river workers received health treatments which greatly aided production.

Prior to, and during the summer months, the Ministry of Public Health organized 170 medical personnel into mobile antiepidemic units. The units were assigned to care for the health of water-conservation workers along the Ch'ao-pai Ho; treat measles patients at Yang-kao Hsien in northern Shansi and venereal diseases patients among the Mongols in Suiyuan; and carry out bubonic plague prevention work among the Mongols in Chahar. The measles epidemic afflicted 4,806 and killed 1,087 people in Yang-kao Hsien prior to the arrival of a mobile unit in the area. In 35 days, the unit wiped out the epidemic with only four persons dying from the disease.

In addition to the above diseases, suitable preventive work was carried out against typhus, relapsing fever, schistosoma japonicum, kala azar, and tuberculosis.

To get a complete picture of the epidemic situation in China, the Ministry of Public Health has established a report system in which information about epidemics is reported from various localities. The information is then collated and published in the weekly I-ch'ing T'ung-pao (Epidemics Situation Bulletin).

In February, the ministry called a land and maritime quarantine worker's conference and decided on future programs.

Antiepidemic experiences during the past 6 months have clearly shown that the spread of infectious diseases can be minimized if speedy and thorough preventive work is carried out in time. In the former years, the fatality rate from infectious diseases in China was more than 50 percent.

Experience has shown that there is a need for more personnel who can give preventive vaccinations and inoculations. Female cadres, primary school teachers, and other cultural and educational workers can be easily taught to give smallpox vaccinations.

Since health agencies have not been established throughout the country as yet, the mobile health units seem to be the most effective in combating diseases. However, in the future, each province or city will coordinate health and sanitation work with a national agency and health organizations set up for antiepidemic activities.

There is a need to set up or restore biological products laboratories in each major administrative region under the National Biological Products Appraisal Office to increase the production of bacterial and virus vaccines, antitoxins, diagnostic antigens, toxins, and toxoids.

There is also a need to improve the existing methods of reporting epidemic conditions to the Ministry of Public Health, and of carrying out inspections, fumigation of land and maritime transport, and in giving curative and preventive services to travelers.

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